

# MEDIA ADVISORY

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#### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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## Virginia State Board of Elections - Fact Sheet THE 2008 GENERAL ELECTION AT A GLANCE

## What: Virginia's 2008 General Election Fact Sheet for Media

Attached is Virginia's 2008 General Election Fact Sheet. The information compiled in this 12 page fact sheet was developed to assist the media.

On Election Day, November 4, a new fact sheet will be available with updated statistics. The 'new' information will be noted on that fact sheet.

Information about media logistics for Election Day including times for the scheduled news briefings and updates, and obtaining election results will be distributed in the form of a Technical Advisory that will be distributed soon.

This fact sheet will also be available on the website.

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# Virginia State Board of Elections Fact Sheet THE 2008 GENERAL ELECTION AT A GLANCE

**Virginia Firsts:** The first presidential election was held on Wednesday, January 7, 1789. George Washington was an uncontested candidate and received 69 of the 146 electoral votes. Virginia was one of ten states to participate in the elections; one of only four states to choose presidential electors by popular vote; and the only one to split their electors by district.

#### **Election History:**

Winner Take All System- Starting in 1800, Virginia allocated their Presidential electors on a winner take all system. In the nation's first competitive presidential election (1796), John Adams won by only three electoral votes. The Jeffersonians noted that their candidate had lost one electoral vote in his home state of Virginia and a second one in neighboring North Carolina.

Just before the 1800 election, Thomas Jefferson wrote, "election by districts would be best, if it could be general; but while 10 states choose either by their legislatures or by a general ticket [winner-take-all], it is folly & worse than folly for the other" states to fragment their electoral votes by using a district system.

Thus, Virginia changed from its district system to the winner-take-all rule, thereby ensuring Jefferson 100% of his home state's electoral votes in the 1800 election. Over a period of years, more and more states gravitated to the statewide winner-take-all rule. By 1836, all but one state had adopted the statewide winner-take-all rule. All states used the statewide winner-take-all rule between 1896 and 1972. Maine (since 1972) and Nebraska (since 1992) have used a congressional district system for allocating their electoral votes.

**Separate Votes for President and Vice President-** In contests prior to 1804, the electors did not vote separately for president and vice-president. Instead, the candidate who garnered the majority of the electoral vote was elected president, and the candidate with the second largest number of votes became the vice president. The election of 1800 showed the weakness of this system. Thomas Jefferson and Aaron Burr each received the same number of electoral votes, and the election had to be resolved by a state delegation vote in the House of Representatives.

The adoption of the Twelfth Amendment in 1804, which required the electors to cast separate votes for president and vice president, rectified this problem. This constitutional change marked the beginning of political parties, with two persons running on the same ticket for the two different offices.

**Number of Precincts Statewide:** There are 2349 precincts in the Commonwealth of Virginia, not including central absentee precincts.

**Registered Voters:** As of October 14, 2008 there were 5,021,993 registered voters in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The last day to register to vote in the general election was October 6, 2008.

Any person who was 17 years old and would be eighteen years of age on or before November 4 could register in advance to vote in the November presidential election. This included the intervening primary held in February and June.

## **Breakdown of Recently Registered Voters:**

As of October 14, 2008 the net registration gain of voters is:

Net Gain since 01/01/2008	436,155
Registrations as of 10/13/2008	5,021,993
Registrations as of 01/01/2008	4,585,838

About 168,000 people under the age of 25 have registered to vote since January 2008, with about 52 percent of those being women. Also, 86,960 individuals between the ages of 25 and 34 have registered since January 1, 2008 with about 53% of that group being women. In every age group more women have registered than men.

## Summary of Virginia Registration and Turnout Statistics November General Elections: 1976-Present

Statistics	November General Er	cetions. 1770 TTes		
Year	Total Registered	Total Voting	Turnout (% Voting of Total Registered)	Voting Absentee (Included in Total Voting)
2008	5,021,993			
2004	4,517,980	3,223,156	71.4%	222,059
2000	4,073,644	2,789,808	68.5%	150,414
1996*	3,322,740	2,468,229	74.3%	116,606
1992	3,055,486	2,582,966	84.5%	141,123
1988	2,877,144	2,231,876	77.6%	108,237

1984	2,675,641	2,180,515	81.5%	113,686
1980	2,309,181	1,881,648	81.4%	84,811
1976	2,123,849	1,716,182	80.8%	

<sup>\*</sup> The National Voter Registration Act ("Motor Voter") was implemented in Virginia beginning in March 1996. This Act allowed voter registration forms to be submitted through Department of Motor Vehicles offices and other designated agencies, or to be submitted by mail. Prior to NVRA, most applicants had to appear in person, before a registrar, in order to register. (Uniformed and Overseas voters were exempt from the in-person registration requirement.)

**How to get on the ballot:** The signature requirement for independent candidates to get on the ballot varies from office to office. For national offices such as President, Vice President and U.S. Senate petitions must contain the signatures of 10,000 qualified voters, including at least 400 from each of Virginia's eleven congressional districts.

Independent candidates running for the House of Representatives must have 1,000 signatures from qualified voters of the congressional district in which the candidate is seeking election.

Party nominees (Democratic and Republican) must follow their state party plan.

**Ballot Order:** The two major political parties appear on the ballot first, then candidates endorsed by "recognized political parties," then unaffiliated candidates (Independent.)

The State Board of Elections determined the order in which the political party nominees (Democratic and Republican) appear on the ballot through a random drawing which took place at the Virginia State Board of Elections meeting which was held on June 24, 2008.

The order of candidates endorsed by "recognized political parties" (Independent Green, Libertarian and Green) was determined by a later random drawing at the Virginia State Board of Elections meeting on September 8, 2008, once their petitions were certified.

The presidential candidates are listed below in the order they will appear on the ballot.

#### **Presidential Candidates:**

Democratic Party
Barack Obama, President
Joe Biden, Vice President

Republican Party
John McCain, President
Sarah Palin, Vice President

## **Independent Green Party**

Chuck Baldwin, President Darrell L. Castle, Vice President

## **Libertarian Party**

Bob Barr, President Wayne A. Root, Vice President

## **Green Party**

Cynthia McKinney, President Rosa Clemente, Vice President

## **Independent**

Ralph Nader, President Matt Gonzalez, Vice President

#### **United States Senate Candidates:**

Democratic Party - Mark R. Warner

Republican Party - James S. "Jim" Gilmore III

**Independent - Glenda Gail Parker** 

Libertarian - William B. Redpath

## **United States House of Representatives Candidates (\*indicates incumbent):**

## 1<sup>st</sup> District Candidates

Bill S. Day, Jr. - D

\*Robert J. "Rob" Wittman - R

Nathan D. Larson - L

Localities with precincts in the 1<sup>st</sup> District: Caroline County, Essex County, Fauquier County, Fredericksburg City, Gloucester County, Hampton City, James City County, King & Queen County, King George County, King William County, Lancaster County, Mathews County, Middlesex County, Newport News City, Northumberland County, Poquoson City, Prince William County, Richmond County, Spotsylvania County, Stafford County, Westmoreland County, Williamsburg City and York County

## 2<sup>nd</sup> District Candidates

Glenn C. Nye III – D

\*Thelma D. Drake – R

**Localities with precincts in the 2<sup>nd</sup> District:** Accomack County, Hampton City, Norfolk City, Northampton County and Virginia Beach City

# 3<sup>rd</sup> District Candidates

\*Robert C. "Bobby" Scott - D

**Localities with precincts in the 3<sup>rd</sup> District:** Charles City County, Hampton City, Henrico County, James City County, New Kent County, Newport News City, Norfolk City, Portsmouth City, Prince George County, Richmond City, Surry County and York County

# 4<sup>th</sup> District Candidates

Andrea R. Miller - D

\*J. Randy Forbes - R

**Localities with precincts in the 4<sup>th</sup> District:** Amelia County, Brunswick County, Chesapeake City, Chesterfield County, Colonial Heights City, Dinwiddie County, Emporia City, Franklin City, Greensville County, Hopewell City, Isle Of Wight County, Nottoway County, Petersburg City, Powhatan County, Prince George County, Southampton County, Suffolk City and Sussex County

# $\underline{\mathbf{5}}^{\underline{th}}$ District Candidates

Tom S. P. Perriello - D

\*Virgil H. Goode, Jr. - R

**Localities with precincts in the 5<sup>th</sup> District:** Albemarle County, Appomattox County, Bedford City, Bedford County, Brunswick County, Buckingham County, Campbell County, Charlotte County, Charlottesville City, Cumberland County, Danville City, Fluvanna County, Franklin County, Greene County, Halifax County, Henry County, Lunenburg County, Martinsville City, Mecklenburg County, Nelson County, Pittsylvania County and Prince Edward County

# $\underline{6}^{\underline{th}}$ District Candidates

S. "Sam" Rasoul - D

\*R. W. "Bob" Goodlatte - R

Janice Lee Allen - I

**Localities with precincts in the 6<sup>th</sup> District:** Alleghany County, Amherst County, Augusta County, Bath County, Bedford County, Botetourt County, Buena Vista City, Covington City, Harrisonburg City, Highland County, Lexington City, Lynchburg City, Roanoke City, Roanoke County, Rockbridge County, Rockingham County, Salem City, Shenandoah County, Staunton City and Waynesboro City

# 7<sup>th</sup> District Candidates

Anita Hartke - D

\*Eric I. Cantor - R

**Localities with precincts in the 7<sup>th</sup> District:** Caroline County, Chesterfield County, Culpeper County, Goochland County, Hanover County, Henrico County, Louisa County, Madison County, Orange County, Page County, Rappahannock County, Richmond City and Spotsylvania County

## 8<sup>th</sup> District Candidates

\*James P. "Jim" Moran, Jr. - D

Mark W. Ellmore - R

J. Ron Fisher - IG

## 9<sup>th</sup> District Candidates

\*Rick C. Boucher - D

**Localities with precincts in the 9<sup>th</sup> District:** Alleghany County, Bland County, Bristol City, Buchanan County, Carroll County, Covington City, Craig County, Dickenson County, Floyd County, Galax City, Giles County, Grayson County, Henry County, Lee County, Montgomery County, Norton City, Patrick County, Pulaski County, Radford City, Roanoke County, Russell County, Scott County, Smyth County, Tazewell County, Washington County, Wise County and Wythe County

## 10<sup>th</sup> District Candidates

Judy M. Feder - D

\*Frank R. Wolf - R

Neeraj C. Nigam - I

 $\begin{array}{l} \textbf{Localities with precincts in the 10}^{th} \ \textbf{District:} \ \ \text{Clarke County, Fairfax County, Fauquier County,} \\ \text{Frederick County, Loudoun County, Manassas City, Manassas Park City, Prince William County, Warren County and Winchester City} \\ \end{array}$ 

# 11th District Candidates (Open Seat)

Gerald E. "Gerry" Connolly - D

Keith S. Fimian - R

Joseph P. Oddo - IG

#### **Other Elections:**

There are other elections taking place in localities across the state such as: Mayor, Commissioner of Revenue, Commonwealth Attorney, Board of Supervisors Member, City Council Member, County Board Member, School Board Member, Town Council Member and Treasurer.

For a full list of the candidates and ballot issues in a specific locality go to <a href="http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/Cidate\_Information/Index.html">http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/Cidate\_Information/Index.html</a>

**Electors:** When a voter votes for his or her choice for President and Vice President, the voter is actually voting for the slate of Electors for that candidate. Virginia has 13 electoral votes (one for each congressional district, plus two at large). The names of the individual electors no longer appear on the ballot for space reasons, but the names are available on the Virginia State Board of Elections website at: <a href="http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/documents/08PVPGEN\_CAN.pdf">http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/documents/08PVPGEN\_CAN.pdf</a>.

The Presidential Electors elected for Virginia will meet on December 15, 2008 at 12:00 p.m. in the State Capitol to vote.

Additional information about the Electoral College is available on the website of the National Archives: http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/electoral-college/2008.

## **Presidential Election Turnouts Historically:**

## General Election- November 2, 2004

#### **Office: President**

<b>Candidates</b>	<b>Party</b>	Vo	ote Totals	<b>Percentage</b>
Bush/Cheney	Republican		1,716,959	53.68%
Kerry/Edwards	Democratic		1,454,742	45.48%
Badnarik/Campagna	Libertarian		11,032	0.34%
Peroutka/Baldwin	Constitutional		10,161	0.32%
Write Ins			5,473	0.17%
		<b>Total:</b>	3,198,367	

## General Election- November 7, 2000

#### **Office: President**

<b>Candidates</b>	<b>Party</b>	<b>Vote</b>	<u>Totals</u>	<b>Percentage</b>
Bush/Cheney	Republican		1,437,490	52.5%
Gore/Lieberman	Democrat		1,217,290	44.4%
Nader/La Duke	Green		59,398	2.2%
Browne/Olivier	Libertarian		15,198	0.6%
Buchanan/Foster	Reform		5,455	0.2%
Write Ins			2,807	0.1%
Phillips/Frazier	Constitution		1,809	0.1%
-		Total:	2.739.447	

#### **How Virginia Voted in Past Presidential Elections:**

Year	Candidate	Party	Percentage of Va. popular vote	Won the Presidential Election
1960	Richard Nixon	R	52%	No
1964	Lyndon Johnson	D	54%	Yes
1968	Richard Nixon	R	43%	Yes
1972	Richard Nixon	R	68%	Yes
1976	Gerald R. Ford	R	49%	No
1980	Ronald Reagan	R	53%	Yes
1984	Ronald Reagan	R	62%	Yes
1988	George H. W. Bush	R	60%	Yes
1992	George H. W. Bush	R	45%	No
1996	Bob Dole	R	48%	No
2000	George W. Bush	R	53%	Yes
2004	George W. Bush	R	54%	Yes

(2004). US Presidential Election Maps: 1860-1996. Retrieved 10/08/2008, from the University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center: <a href="http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/elections/maps/">http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/elections/maps/</a>.

**Ensure the Vote:** The goal of the Ensure the Vote Campaign was to ensure efficiency at the polls November 4. The State Board of Elections focused on particular objectives to accomplish this mission. The goals were to assist localities in recruiting election officers, educate Virginians on the importance of checking and updating their voter information, ensure qualified Virginia voters can vote absentee, ensure the vote for the disabled and assist the media in providing accurate information to the public.

The State Board received an overwhelming amount of support this year from volunteers, corporations, public officials and media outlets. With their help, 12,000 individuals were recruited to serve as Officers of Elections. To date, all of the localities have sufficient individuals to serve in this capacity. The following companies are participating partners in the campaign: AARP, Altria Group, Inc., Bank of America, Erie Insurance, Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond, LandAmerica Financial, League of Women Voters, MWV-MeadWestvaco, Richmond Association of Realtors, Rockingham Group, Sallie Mae, State Council of Higher Education of Virginia, State Farm Insurance, U.S. Investigations Services, Ukrop's Grocery, Virginia Automobile Dealers Association, Virginia Chamber of Commerce, Virginia State Employees.

**Absentee Voting Overview:** Absentee voting allows qualified voters to participate in upcoming elections even though they may not be able to go to the polls on Election Day. Absentee voting in person begins approximately 45 days before the November General Election and about 30 days before other elections.

There are two ways to vote absentee, either by mail or in person.

The deadline to submit an <u>application</u> to vote by absentee is Tuesday, October 28, 2008 by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. Applications may be received by mail, fax or as a scanned email attachment. The voter's local registrar must receive the application by the deadline.

All voted absentee ballots must be submitted as directed in the instructions with the absentee ballot by the time the polls close at 7:00 p.m. on Election Day, November 4. All absentee ballots, properly cast, will be counted.

The deadline for <u>applying and casting</u> an absentee ballot in-person at the voter's local registrar's office is Saturday, November 1, 2008.

A voter may only receive his or her <u>absentee ballot</u> by email if they are active duty military or are a spouse or dependent residing with them, live outside of the 48 contiguous states or lives overseas.

Virginia allows a registered voter to vote by absentee ballot for any of the following reasons:

- Any person who, on personal business or vacation, will be absent from the county or city in which they are registered
- Any person who will be absent from the county or city in which they are registered due to business
- Any person who is a member of a uniformed service of the United States, on active duty, or a member of the merchant marine of the United States, or the spouse or dependent residing with a member of a uniformed service member
- Any student attending a school or institution of learning outside the city or county in which he or she is registered, or his or her spouse
- Any person who is temporarily residing outside the United States, their cohabitant or spouse
- Any person who is temporarily residing outside the United States for employment, their cohabitant or spouse
- Any person who is unable to go in person to the polls on the day of election because of a disability, illness or pregnancy
- Any person who is confined while awaiting trial or for having been convicted of a misdemeanor
- Any person who is a member of an electoral board, registrar, officer of election, or custodian of voting equipment
- Any person who is unable to go in person to the polls on the day of the election because
  he is primarily and personally responsible for the care of an ill or disabled family member
  who is confined at home
- Any person who is unable to go in person to the polls due to a religious obligation
- Any person who will be commuting to and from his home to his place of work for eleven or more hours of the thirteen that the polls are open (6:00 AM to 7:00 PM).
- In a presidential election, any voter may request an absentee ballot for presidential and vice presidential electors only. Please note that when selecting this option, the voter will not be able to vote for any other candidates or issues if applicable.

This year the Virginia General Assembly added pregnant women to the list of people who are eligible to vote absentee and expanded "illness and disability" to include mental illness as well as physical illness and disabilities.

**Absentee Applications Approved:** As of October 20, 2008 there have been 232,890 absentee applications approved for the November election.

**Absentee Ballots Received:** As of October 20, 2008 the localities have received 110,392 absentee ballots.

**Military and Overseas Absentee Statistics:** 32,334 absentee applications have been approved from military and overseas voters. Whereas, 3,025 of those applications are from <u>only Military overseas</u>.

## **Approximate Absentee Statistics for February 12 Primary:**

For the February 12, 2008 Presidential Primary, there were approximately 39,988 approved absentee applications.

Approximately 33,587 absentee ballots were received.

## Reasons People Voted Absentee in the February 2008 Presidential Primary:

	Percentage of
Reason Code	Reason
1D - Personal Business or	
Vacation	27.19%
1C – Business	18.15%
1A – Student	15.54%
4A - Election Official	12.80%
2A - Disability or Illness	10.97%
6A - Military - Domestic	3.49%
1E – Working	3.18%
6D - Temporarily Residing	
Outside US Due To	
Employment	2.97%
6C - Temporarily Residing	
Outside US	2.90%
2B - Primary Caregiver	1.33%
6E - Military - Overseas	0.89%
6B - Military -	
Spouse/Dependent - Domestic	0.35%
6F - Military -	
Spouse/Dependent - Overseas	0.14%
1B - Spouse of Student	0.05%
5A – Religion	0.04%
3B - Confined, Convicted of	
Misdemeanor	0.01%

**Voting Equipment:** Throughout Virginia there are 10,600 pieces of equipment. 90% are Direct Read Electronic and the other 10% are OpScans and Automarks.

Equipment total comparisons:

			Registered Voters
	Registered	Voting	Per Piece of
Year	Voters	Equipment	Equipment
2008	5,021,993	10,600	474
2007	4,530,149	9,807	462
2004	4,517,980	5,967	757

The registered voters per piece of equipment does not take into account locales that use OpScans as the primary means of voting or locales that are augmenting DREs with OpScans. Typically, only 1 OpScan is required per precinct.

From 2007 to 2008 there has been an 8% increase in the number of units. Since 2004 there has been a 78% increase with 4,633 units being added.

All locales report having at least the minimum number of DREs as required in the Code of Virginia.

**Provisional Ballot:** This is a paper ballot which is cast separately and sealed in a green envelope. The voter must provide the information requested and sign the Statement of Voter.

Provisional Ballots are not counted on Election Day, the Electoral Board will meet the day after the election to determine whether each provisional voter was qualified to vote. The votes of qualified voters will then be counted and included in the results of the locality.

#### **Provisional Ballots are used:**

- When the voter's name is not on the poll book, but the voter believes he or she is registered in that precinct and the registrar's office cannot be contacted to verify that the voter is registered.
- When a first-time voter in a Federal election who registered by mail without identification is unable to present an acceptable form of identification. Acceptable forms of identification include: a current and valid photo ID, current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck or other government document.
- When a voter who has sent an absentee ballot appears at his polling place stating that his ballot was not received or has been lost, and no absentee ballot has yet been received from that voter. (*This provision of the law was added in 2006*).
- When normal voting hours are extended by a court order. (Whenever voting hours are extended, people who vote under this extension vote by provisional ballot. This has never happened in Virginia.)

**The Canvass Process:** Immediately after the election, each of the 134 Electoral Boards must convene to ascertain the results of all elections held in its county or city and certify the results.

The Electoral Board meets no later than 5:00 PM on the day after the election.

The canvassing process includes: 1) counting provisional ballots 2) collecting vote summaries from the precincts 3) rechecking the total number of ballots cast compared with the reported number and 4) certifying the results.

**State/Federal Certification:** The Virginia State Board of Elections certifies the results of the presidential election. Immediately following its certification by the State Board of Elections, the agency changes the classification of the election results on its web site from Unofficial to Official and makes available to the public, election results summaries and locality/precinct details.

The State Board of Elections will meet to certify the results of the election on Monday, November 24, 2008.

The members of the Virginia State Board of Elections are, Chairman, Jean Cunningham, Vice-Chair, Harold Pyon and Secretary, Nancy Rodrigues.

**Recounts:** In Virginia, there are no automatic recounts; only the presumptive losing candidate can ask for a recount; and only in cases where the difference between the apparent winning and losing candidate is not more than 1 percent of the total votes cast for the two candidates. The petition for a recount of a presidential election shall be filed no later than 5:00 p.m. on the second calendar day after the State Board certifies the result of the election.

**The Recount Court:** As soon as the petition is filed the chief judge of the Circuit Court will notify the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Virginia, who shall designate two other judges to sit with the chief judge. Once all votes are recounted, the court will certify the candidate with the most votes as the winner. The recount procedure is final and not subject to appeal.

There is additional election information on the Virginia State Board of Elections website at:
<a href="https://www.sbe.virginia.gov">www.sbe.virginia.gov</a>

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